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ABSTRACT

"Confronting the New Politics of Child and Family Policy in the United States" is an 18-month project designed to help states, local governments, and the voluntary sector as they respond to the social policy debates and changes precipitated by the 104th Congress. The project's main vehicle will be a series of reports, based on a series of small conferences, on the policy climate, of which this report is the first. The report takes a broad-brush approach to clarify the political, economic, and social context of the new policies and it explores the opportunities and problems for child and family policies that are associated with these developments. Three papers in this volume were commissioned as background for the first project discussion session: (1) "Coming into a New Land: The Context Shaping American Social Policy" (Hugh Heclo); (2) "Budget Deficits and the Race to the Bottom" (Paul E. Peterson); and (3) "The Budgetary Context for Changes in Safety-net Programs" (Robert Greenstein). Discussion of these papers, in November 1995, provided a backdrop for the next phase, focusing on how to cope with the changes. "Coping with the Changes in Child and Family Policy: Exploring the Choices" by Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn begins the examination of approaches to funding shortfalls and new flexibility in program changes. An appendix presents the conference program. References follow the papers. (Contains 1 table and 12 figures.) (SLD)

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